

St. Francis of Assisi Parish
March 12, 2020 - Minutes of the Parish Pastoral Council

The meeting was **called to order** by Jack Smith at 9:04 a.m. Kathy F. led the opening prayer with Bob reading the scripture.

Attendance: Fr. Michael Woods, Jack Smith, Michelle Fecteau-Holmes, Joe Nanna, Jim Masson, Bob McCone, Kathy Fitch, Sharon Helm, Mary Vivian White, Bert Adams, Mary Connell, Tom Connell, Joe Schurger, Judy Johnson, Pat Joyce, Sandy D'Alessandro, Donat Renaud, Ruth Hughes, Kathy Donley.

Approval of the Minutes: Approved by consensus.

Opening Remarks – Jack began with remarking that extensive information had been sent out to members and that Father would be talking about the project and Jack said that if anyone has questions or does not agree, then this is the time to speak up. We won't succeed if we're not all going the same direction.

Staff Reports:

Financial Report & Budget – Joe reported that he emailed the Financial Reports to the PPC and that the financials are still looking great. We now have \$150,000 in unrestricted accounts and at the start of the year we only had \$41,000. Joe cautioned members that this could all change if the Coronavirus has a large effect on our parish.

Communications – Michelle reported that there will be a full color bulletin beginning at the end of this month and she passed around a sample for everyone to see. Also the tickets have been printed for the Uganda Children's Concert and there will be 250 tickets for parishioners and 100 for visitors. In the Office Conference Room there is now a large smart TV and AV system so that small groups can meet there and not take up the entire hall for a small meeting. There will also be streaming ability. This will allow for additional groups to meet until we have the addition on the hall. Michelle also said that the streaming of the Mass is going very well at Good Samaritan and now they have a holy water font and small, easy to read missals, and Father will be doing a penance service for them. They also receive the same handouts that are provided at the doors of our Church so that they get the full experience and feel more like they are a part of us. Jack is going to use our parish as an example for the Council of Churches to show what they could be doing at Good Sam's.

Jack also mentioned that our Parish Retreat will be on Wednesday, May 13th with Sister Anna Marie. It will start with Mass at 8 a.m. and there will be snacks and lunch for everyone so that people can keep their energy level up. It will go until about 3:30 p.m. with Sister doing three presentations. They are asking everyone to give the gift of time to the Lord and to the parish by attending. Michelle will be sending out the details soon. It's being called an Evangelization Retreat, a personal encounter with Jesus and the Holy Spirit. We are trying to build a tight new community that will draw others in. Jack wants everyone to start promoting it now. Also, after the retreat, on May 31st there will be a new Pentecost gathering at the Four Corners on Peavine Road. It will have music, food, games and "Dinner on the Grass". We're hoping to attract fallen away Catholics back to the Church.

Pastor's Report –Father Michael spoke about the Radical Welcome document that had been sent out by Jack and stated that it is an amazing document and is difficult to live by. We want everyone to "buy in" to this idea. When Jesus came, he showed us a "radical" way of looking at God. There are three persons in one God. What we see is the fruit. Jesus saw that the fruit was poisoned and needed to get back to its roots. We have difficulty imagining the difference between the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Old Testament is all about getting ready for Jesus. Mary was the only one who was ready. Her view of herself had to change as she imagined herself with no children. She asked how this would happen and when she was told it would be done by the Holy Spirit, she said yes without any more questions.

Jesus was crucified for saying that God was his father. There is no competition between the three persons of the Holy Trinity. Father spoke about his past when he began to see that we are all needy and when he felt like Mass was the only safe place. Really meeting Jesus is deep and there is always so much more there. Coming to St. Francis has been a great grace for him. Living on his own has given him more time for prayer and more time to get to know people better. He feels very gifted here and feels that we need Christ to be our center of our Parish. Everyone wants to be closer to the center and he is looking for Christ every time he meets us. He is asking us to get out of our "sinful" human nature by the grace of God. Father said that many dioceses are looking for how to move forward and we have to sort and identify what will work in our parish. He said that Jesus wants to give us the Holy Spirit and we have to be open to the Holy Spirit and develop a spirit of encounter. Reinventing the Liturgy Committee is essential! Everyone knows what to expect and there is growth when even one thing changes.

Father went to a silent retreat and was amazed how the silence helped him. He was

asking what is the place of the priest in all of this? He has good intentions and in change there is growth. The Holy Spirit is in the middle of this. Father said that he's looking for radical ideas like his St. Patrick's dance that makes people pay attention while he explains who St. Patrick really was. He was concerned about what people would think and didn't want to offend people, but he sensed that people would give it proper consideration and learn and grow from it. He wants us to begin to see the Spirit at work. The Devil is at work all the time and we have to be aware. The way we can counter this is to practice kindness, patience, mercy, and forgiveness. The Devil creates anger, resentment and frustration. We don't become suddenly holy, it is a journey and we need to know where we're going and how to get there.

The culture of Encounter can be offensive to some. We still need to be called to where we are. After the Resurrection Jesus was walking with the two men, and they didn't recognize him. There are so many things that divide people. How can we figure out how to become one? Every person I meet is the lover - really? Hosea was asked to marry the prostitute and love her. As a parish, we too, are supposed to love each person and we all need forgiveness even though we fall away again and again, as did the prostitute. We are told to forgive 7 times 70, always forgive. Encountering Christ is very important.

We want to reflect on how we become a radically welcoming parish. We see people all the time that we don't know or don't know much about them. We want to stir people up and cause them to look for more opportunities to be welcoming and to get to know each other. We want to grow in discipleship and begin to share our faith. Even if we are not ready, Jesus is in front of us asking, calling us. If we are to be Christ centered, we need to make this fit us. Fill out the form sent by the Leadership Committee. Each committee needs to consolidate and send back one form per committee with comments so this will be ready before the retreat in May.

Other Business: Ruth Hughes said that she has received a number of emails and calls asking if the parish will cancel some events due to the Coronavirus outbreak. Father mentioned the President's address to the nation last night and asked for input from the members who responded that the unnecessary gatherings such as the Pizza Dinners after the Stations of the Cross and the Saint Patrick's Dinner should be cancelled. Father will still say Mass and those who are ill and those who are not comfortable coming should know that they can stay home. The phone tree and parish email alerts will pass on this information. *(Since the meeting, the Bishop has cancelled all Masses and gatherings, through Easter and until further notice.)*

Closing Prayer was offered by Jack and then he adjourned the meeting at 10:40 a.m.

Committee Reports: Due March 30th

Next Meeting: Thursday, April 9th

Future meetings: April 9th, May 14th, June 11th.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Donley

Recorder